

March 5, 2021

The Honorable Gary A. Winfield
The Honorable Steven J. Stafstrom
The Honorable Alex Kasser
The Honorable Matt Blumenthal
The Honorable John A. Kissel
The Honorable Craig C. Fishbein
Joint Committee on Judiciary
Connecticut General Assembly
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
judtestimony@cga.ct.gov

Re: Testimony regarding Raised Bill No. 6321, An Act Concerning the Adoption and Implementation of the Connecticut Parentage Act

Dear Chairs Winfield and Stafstrom, Vice Chairs Kasser and Blumenthal, Ranking Members Kissel and Fishbein, and Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Davina Fankhauser, and I am the President of Fertility Within Reach, a patient advocacy group working to increase access to timely and appropriate fertility healthcare. Even with laws passed, as we have seen in the great state of Connecticut, there are still barriers for families. Currently, in Connecticut, the legal parent-child relationship is dependent on the circumstances of birth, or the marital status, gender, or sexual orientation of the parents. This legislative session, you have an opportunity to establish a law that will bring equality to all children and meet the modern idea of family, acknowledging and protecting the fact that children come from all types of loving families.

As a mother of two children, I cannot imagine being limited in my parental rights and responsibilities, including my right to care, financially support, provide medical insurance, communicate directly with schools or physicians, and make decisions for my children. But that is the case for too many families in Connecticut, and I am asking you to take action by voting in support of Raised Bill No. 6321, the Connecticut Parentage Act (CPA).

Many Connecticut families only have access to parental rights through adoption, requiring court time and resources, which are costly to families, as well as the state. Further, couples intending to build families are moving out of state to ensure they have timely and appropriate parental rights. Sadly, the loss of residents negatively impacts Connecticut's economy and society as a whole. It does not need to be this way, and I ask you to take action to ensure Connecticut's law is constitutional and appropriate for all families.

I am grateful that legislators and government agencies such as the Department of Health & Vital Records, the Department of Children & Families, and the Department of Social Services recognize the importance of this issue. We hope that you will work collaboratively with those of us who work with these families' day-in and day-out and support CPA because it not only benefits the state economically, but also will provide equality, security, and stability for children and parents. We believe this is something everyone can get behind.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony and I hope you will concur and vote to pass Raised Bill No. 6321.

Sincerely,
Davina Fankhauser